

FY 2019 ECCR Questionnaire

Please describe your ECCR program in your region or program office.

EPA's ability to protect human health and the environment depends upon the integrity of the science on which it relies. The EPA Scientific Integrity Policy provides a vision and a roadmap for scientific integrity at the Agency. The Policy applies to all EPA employees and, therefore, involves all environmental statutes under which the Agency performs its duties.

The Scientific Integrity Program ("the SI Program" or "the Program") is led by the Scientific Integrity Official, who chairs a cross-Agency Scientific Integrity Committee. The Program helps to implement the Scientific Integrity Policy. The Program also addresses allegations of a loss of scientific integrity and has used Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution (ECCR) to obtain timely and cost-effective resolution of some types of disagreements involving scientific integrity issues. The Program's ECCR projects have included an authorship dispute and a differing scientific opinion regarding a scientific method. In each of these projects, the stakeholders agreed to the process, appreciated the neutrality of the mediators, and accepted the results.

The SI Program also used an ECCR contract to obtain the services of a neutral party to conduct facilitated structured interviews of EPA leaders. The goal of that project was to initiate dialogues on scientific integrity, to learn about the leaders' understanding and perspective of the Scientific Integrity Policy, and to obtain their recommendations for policy implementation and new initiatives related to scientific integrity. The Agency's Office of the Science Advisor provided the funding for the project. The facilitator was Susan Podziba, of Podziba Policy Mediation. The project was completed in September 2019. The Scientific Integrity Program considered the resulting insightful recommendations when developing its work plan for fiscal year 2020.

Effective use of ECCR helps maintain the trust by EPA staff and the public in the quality and integrity of the Agency's science.